

2007 State Meet...

HIGH SCHOOL TRACK

State qualifiers Fischer, Brown to represent Ross

By KEVIN YANIK
Sports Writer

FREMONT — Just two weeks ago, Fremont Ross coach Cathy Esposito's practices were buzzing with dozens of kids — throwers, sprinters, jumpers — who were preparing for their district meet and, perhaps, a trip regionals.

Only two Fremont Ross runners survived those district and regional gauntlets, though, so practices have taken on a whole new look for senior Ashley Fischer and sophomore Deondray Brown.

"It's lonely out here," Fischer said. "It's just me and [Deondray]. I'm doing my thing and he's doing his."

On this particular day, Fischer and Brown warm up together, stretch and then split to separate portions of the track. She's midway through a set of 300-meter runs, and he's sprinting 150 meters at a time along the frontstretch.

Two runners. Two completely different events.

Yet their goals for this weekend are rather similar.

Brown, who will race the 110-meter preliminary hurdles Friday, wants to set a personal record in his event and approach 14.3 seconds. As for Fischer, who will race the 1600 Saturday, she wants to break 5:00 for the first time.

"That would be monumental," Esposito said. "It is. It's huge. Anybody would dream of that. It would definitely take her up there pretty well on the podium."

Brown wants a spot on his podium, as

well. And his best chance to earn that, he said, is if he clears all of his hurdles without grazing one.

"I've been improving on that," he said. "I've just got to get that first and last hurdle. When you start, you're looking down as you come out of the blocks on that first one."

"On the last one, you want to get over that as fast as you can, because you see those guys on the sides of you racing toward the finish."

Brown clipped his final hurdle in the 110 at regionals, but he's confident he can run a clean race in his final one this season.

"I should be strong enough to get over them all," Brown said.

Fischer won't have to leap any hurdles this weekend. She will, however, have her hands full in her first career state meet.

Two years ago, Fischer made the trip to Columbus as a spectator. And that experience, she said, should squash a few nervous as she prepares to run four grueling laps at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium.

"Watching them my sophomore year was amazing," Fischer said. "It was just a whole different meet — the feeling, the aura of it."

Ross track practice has been a whole different experience this week, too, because Little Giants coaches outnumber runners. But this state championship experience is one Brown and Fischer won't soon forget.

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Ross's Fischer finishes fourth in 1600

By VINCE GUERRIERI and KEVIN YANIK
Staff writers

COLUMBUS — It was four years in the making but worth every moment for Ashley Fischer.

Fischer, a Ross senior, made the most of her first trip to the state track meet, turning in a personal-record time of 5:00.63 in the 1600-meter run Saturday, good for fourth place and a spot on the podium.

"We'll take it," said her coach, Cathy Esposito.

"Fischer was soaking in the atmosphere as well as running her best race ever.

"I love being here," she said. "It's the best of the best, and I got fifth. I feel good about it."

The race was won by Beaumont's Emily Infeld, who set a state record with a 4:41.

The Pendleton sisters of Woodmore made their mark at state — and made some history in the process.

Senior Emily won her fourth straight state discus title — the first time anyone has won four straight titles in a field event. She also set the state meet record of 163 feet, four inches.

And younger sister Erin finished second with a throw of 154-10. It marked the first time ever that siblings finished 1-2 in the same event at the state meet.

It was also a personal best for Erin.

"It was huge," said her father and coach, Mike. "It was a PR by a foot, and it looked good."

SJCC's Emily Overmyer didn't break her personal record of 134-1 in the discus, but her throw of 130-06 was good enough for a spot on the podium.

"I achieved one of many goals

that I put out there this year," said Overmyer, who finished sixth. "I'm glad I went out my senior year like this. I'm happy."

Emily Pendleton was second in the shot put as well, throwing 42-10 on her first attempt in the finals. She was in the lead until Alex Rathburn of Berlin Center Western Reserve threw 43 feet, 1/2 inch.

Pendleton then fouled on her next two attempts, and settled for the silver.

Melissa Goodman of Old Fort threw the shot 35 feet, 11 1/2 inches, but didn't advance to the finals — and was not pleased about it.

"I didn't do the best I could," she said. "It's not that I didn't try. I was just nervous."

In the pole vault, Lakota senior Cami Wasserman and junior Jessie Naderer finished third and fourth respectively. Wasserman matched a school record and personal best with an 11-foot jump, and Naderer cleared 10-8.

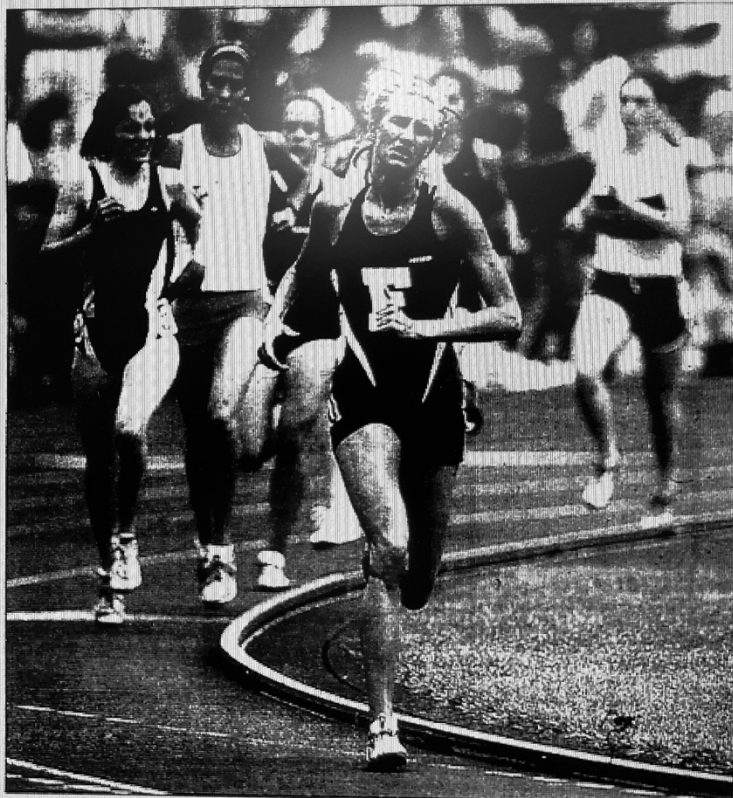
"I'm just glad we finished right next to each other," Wasserman said. "We kind of calmed each other down, and we cheer for each other."

Bellevue's Derrick Berberick finished fifth in the Division II 100-meter dash with a time of 11.20, slightly faster than the 11.24 he ran in the semifinals Friday.

The race was won by Steubenville senior Maurice Bougard, who turned in a 10.8.

"I wanted to get top four," Berberick said. "I was happy being up there, but once you're here, you want to do a little bit better."

For Oak Harbor junior Erica Lipstraw, the 300 hurdles were almost an afterthought when she



Jason J. Molyet/Gannett News Service

FREMONT ROSS'S ASHLEY Fischer runs in the Division I state finals of the 1600. Fischer turned in a personal best time of 5:00.63, but finished fourth in the race.

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